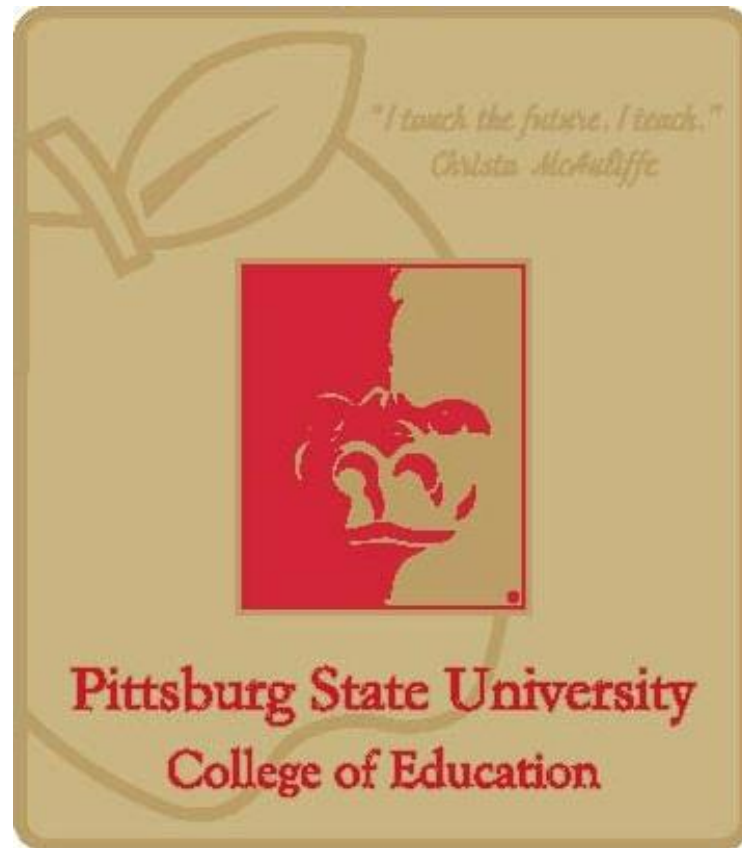


**Master of Arts in Teaching -
Special Education
(High-Incidence Grades K-6 or 6-12)**



2020

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education (MAT-SPED) is a licensure program designed for paraeducators. It is a two-year, 36 credit hour, online program with new cohorts beginning each summer. Candidates must have a baccalaureate degree in a non-teaching area and at least one-year experience working as a paraeducator. The program allows teacher candidates to earn a Kansas teaching license in high-incidence special education, grades K-6 or 6-12. The application deadline is March 1st.

Path 1 – Paraeducator for First and/or Second Year

During the course of the program, candidates must be employed as full time paraeducators in accredited Kansas schools, working with elementary students who have high-incidence learning needs.

Path 2 - Teacher of Record for First and/or Second Year*

In this path, the paraeducator is hired by the school district to be the teacher of record for the first and/or second academic year. Candidates in this path are able to serve as the teacher of record through the limited apprentice license.

*This path is currently available through a pilot program with the Kansas State Department of Education. The pilot is set to expire in summer 2020. If the pilot is not extended or made a permanent regulation, candidates will be required to pursue the program using Path 1.

For additional information contact:

Admission Questions:

Office of Teacher Education
620-235-6153; teachered@pittstate.edu

Academic or Program Questions:

Marc Daczewitz, Ed.D.
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Licensure Questions:

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ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Prospective candidates should apply for admission to Graduate School by completing the application online at <https://go.pittstate.edu/apps.intro.v2>. Official transcripts for all completed course work must be sent to the PSU Graduate School, 1701 S. Broadway, Pittsburg, Kansas, 66762 or electronically to jsmiller@pittstate.edu. A direct transcript should be submitted from each institution from which college credit has been earned.

Upon receipt of all transcripts, the Educational Licensing Officer will analyze the transcript(s) for academic eligibility. To be academically eligible for the MAT – Special Education program, one must hold a baccalaureate degree without an education emphasis with a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) 3.00 and have at least one year of experience as a paraeducator.

Professional Disposition Assessment

Applicants who meet the academic requirements are invited to participate in a professional disposition assessment. The assessment is comprised of multiple components. During the session, the applicant will teach a sample lesson, participate in a group discussion, complete a personal interview, and compose a writing sample based on a case study.

1. Sample Teaching Session

Each applicant will conduct a five-minute teaching session while other applicants and interviewers participate as students. Questions should be expected from the audience.

The lesson should be prepared prior to the assessment session. It should be designed for a specific grade and content level (i.e. 12th grade American history, 8th grade science, etc.). A successful lesson is organized around a main point or learning objective and makes use of age-appropriate materials and strategies to help students master the information.

Applicants may choose from a wide range of topics during the sample teaching lesson, such as adding fractions, naming vegetables in Spanish, or reviewing how a bill becomes a law. The learning objective must be specific so it can be presented effectively during the designated time. For example, the lesson should not cover broad topics such as American literature; rather, it should be more focused such as the difference between similes and metaphors and their use in writing.

When developing the lesson, it is acceptable to assume prior knowledge; this may be communicated to interviewers and other candidates by beginning the lesson with a reference to an earlier lesson (e.g. “Yesterday we began talking about similes. Today, we are going to continue talking about similes and learn about another literary device called a metaphor. Now, can someone tell me about a simile?”)

Remember these key points for an effective sample lesson:

- There is a five-minute time limit.
- Lessons should have a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- Specific objectives should be communicated to the audience.
- Lessons should be interactive and age-appropriate.

Please note: Interview spaces vary – some are set up like typical classrooms while others are conference rooms with one large table. All spaces will have chart paper, dry erase board, or chalkboard and internet access with projection capabilities.

2. Discussion Group

During the discussion period, applicants will discuss two professional articles referenced in the interview packet. Applicants should access the articles and be prepared to participate in a professional conversation.

4. Writing Sample

Each participant will be presented a teaching scenario and will create a writing sample based on the situation.

5. Open Q & A Session

This session will be an overview of the MAT program. Applicants will be able to openly ask questions about the program.

6. Personal Interviews

Applicants will have a personal interview with a faculty member. The goal of the interview is to explore the applicant’s background, qualifications and commitment to expanding educational opportunities for children. The applicant will also have an opportunity to ask questions.

Sample Professional Disposition Assessment Session

| PM Session | Length | Agenda |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| 1:00 – 1:10 | 10 min | Introductions |
| 1:10 – 2:10 | 1 hr | Sample Teaching Session |
| 2:10 – 2:20 | 10 min | Break |
| 2:20 – 3:20 | 60 min | Discussion Group/Writing Sample |
| 3:20 – 3:30 | 10 min | Open Q & A Session |
| 3:30 – 4:30 | 1 hr | Personal Interviews |

Applicants will be notified by mail and e-mail of their acceptance status within two weeks of the assessment session. This communication will also provide information regarding the remaining admission requirements.

Verification of Paraeducator Experience

A letter from the district or cooperative must be submitted verifying at least one year of experience working as a paraeducator.

Two Recommendation Forms

Candidates must have two positive recommendation forms submitted to the Office of Teacher Education, Pittsburg State University, 1701 S. Broadway, Pittsburg, Kansas, 66762. These recommendations should be completed by a university professor, direct supervisor, or someone who is knowledgeable of the candidate’s work with young people. The Office of Teacher Education will provide specific recommendation forms to be used for this requirement.

Background Check

As a requirement for admission to graduate programs in the department of Teaching and Leadership, candidates are required to complete a background check. The background check is required for admission and will not take the place of the required background check for licensure. Once candidates have completed the program and are ready to apply for the initial teaching license, an additional background check will be required by KSDE.

The background check for program admission is complete through Validity Screening Solutions. The Office of Teacher Education will provide specific instructions for the completion of this requirement.

All admission requirements listed above must be completed for candidates to be fully admitted to the MAT – Special Education program. Candidates must be fully admitted to the program by the time they have completed 12 credit hours in the program. If one is not fully admitted at this time, future enrollment will be put on hold. It can lead to a delay in program completion.

COURSEWORK

The 36-credit hour sequence of courses was designed to provide students an optimal academic experience. Candidates are expected to adhere to the following sequence. Courses are only offered during the semester indicated and will not be offered again for at least one year. Courses are taught online utilizing Canvas, PSU's learning management system.

| COURSE SEQUENCE | |
|---|---|
| Elementary K-6 | Secondary 6-12 |
| Year 1 - Summer | |
| SPED 738 Characteristics of Students with High-Incidence Learning Needs | SPED 738 Characteristics of Students with High-Incidence Learning Needs |
| SPED 849 Partnerships with Families of Exceptional Children and Youth | SPED 849 Partnerships with Families of Exceptional Children and Youth |
| Year 1 - Fall | |
| TCHL 825 The Professional Semester Teacher – Initial Experience | TCHL 825 The Professional Semester Teacher – Initial Experience |
| TCHL 879 Instructional Planning and Delivery | TCHL 839 Techniques for Teaching Secondary |
| Year 1 - Spring | |
| SPED 779 Teaching Elementary Students with High-Incidence Learning Needs | SPED 780 Teaching Secondary Students with High-Incidence Learning Needs |
| PSYCH 810 Advanced Educational Psychology | PSYCH 810 Advanced Educational Psychology |
| Year 2 - Summer | |
| SPED 750 Assessment in Special Education | SPED 750 Assessment in Special Education |
| SPED 862 General Education Curriculum for Students with High-Incidence Disabilities | SPED 862 General Education Curriculum for Students with High-Incidence Disabilities |
| Year 2 – Fall | |
| SPED 745 Behavior Analysis and Management | SPED 745 Behavior Analysis and Management |
| READ 870 Developmental Reading Instruction | SPED 749 Methods of Teaching English Language Arts for the Secondary Teacher of Students with High-Incidence Disabilities |
| Year 2 – Spring | |
| SPED 761 Practicum I: High-Incidence Learning Needs | SPED 761 Practicum I: High-Incidence Learning Needs |
| SPED 861 The Professional Special Education | SPED 861 The Professional Special Education |

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Portfolio

As a requirement for graduation, each candidate must create and submit a professional portfolio during the last semester of the program. The portfolio project is divided into two parts; Part I is a philosophy of education that utilizes the Professional Knowledge Base indicators as a foundation to describe personal beliefs regarding special education. Part II is based on the KSDE Standards for teachers of students with high-incidence learning needs.

Licensure Exams

In the state of Kansas, those applying for an initial teaching license must pass a level-appropriate Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) exam as well as the appropriate content assessment for the endorsement(s) sought. These exams are a part of the *Praxis* Subject Assessments. Current testing requirements for the state of Kansas can be found at <https://www.ets.org/praxis/ks/requirements>.

The *Praxis* exams are offered only in a computer delivered format. Test-takers may take the exams at any Prometric Testing Center across the nation. It is important during registration to list Pittsburg State University as a designated score recipient so your scores will be officially reported to the Office of Teacher Education. Further information, including registration, can be found at the *Praxis* website www.ets.org/praxis.

Licensure

The Educational Licensing Officer will provide assistance with submitting all license applications. Candidates can expect the following fees associated with licensing and testing.

- Licensure Exams
 - Principles of Learning and Teaching - \$146
 - Content exams –\$120 - \$160 (A content exam is required for each endorsement sought for a teaching license.)
- License application fee - \$60 - \$70
- KSDE background check fee - \$50

If licensure is sought in any state other than Kansas, there will be additional application and background check fees for each state.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Teacher candidates are expected to observe and adhere to the professional requirements for educators. Candidates need to be familiar with each of the following in order to uphold policies and legal requirements for educators.

Kansas Educator Code of Conduct

http://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/TLA/Licensure/KS_Ed_Code_Conduct_Brochure031014.pdf

The professional educator shall work in the best interest of their students and honor their responsibilities to their students, school, district, community, state and profession as evidence by:

- Responsibilities to Student
- Responsibilities to District
- Responsibilities to Profession

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

Student records and information are protected under this federal law. Teachers must be aware of the requirements in order to appropriately maintain required confidentiality.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

<http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/pps/pages/reportchildabuseandneglect.aspx>

All teachers, school administrators or other employees of an educational institution are mandated reporters for child abuse and neglect under the Kansas reporting law (K.S.A. 38-2223). Teacher candidates must be aware of their legal responsibility and the required steps to make such a report.

UNIVERSITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Student Success Programs

The Student Success Programs office is designed to be the success center for students at PSU and is located in 113 Axe Library. The staff in Student Success Programs serves as advocates to all undergraduate students. There are multiple programs offered through their office including the Student Success Center. The Student Success Center hosts Academic Success Workshops, tutoring and various study groups. More information about Student Success Programs can be found at: <http://www.pittstate.edu/office/student-success-programs/>

The Writing Center

The Writing Center is located in 112 Axe Library. The center offers writing workshops and one-on-one consultations for any writing project. Consultations can be face-to-face or online. The services are free of charge for all PSU students. For more information, go to: http://www.pittstate.edu/office/writing_center/

Center for Student Accommodations

The Center for Student Accommodations provides educational support services to currently enrolled PSU students with a diagnosed learning disability, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or a physical/mental illness which substantially impairs one or more major life activities. Disabled students may qualify for services that accommodate for their impairments and provide equal access to educational opportunity. <http://www.pittstate.edu/office/center-for-student-accommodations>

Gorilla Geeks

The Gorilla Geeks Help Desk assists students, faculty and staff with various technological needs. Some of the services available to all include help with GUS and GusPINs, assistance with PSU email accounts, assistance with educational software packages used on campus, basic help with computer hardware or software problems and help with wireless connectivity issues. Gorilla Geek is located in 109 Whitesitt Hall. For more information, go to: <http://www.pittstate.edu/office/gorilla-geeks/>

Bryant Student Health Center

The mission of the Bryant Student Health Center is to provide quality health care that is accessible, affordable, culturally sensitive and student-focused. Further information, including available services, can be found at: <http://www.pittstate.edu/office/health/>

Testing Center

The University Testing Center administers tests offered by multiple testing companies. A full description of exams offered and testing availability can be found at: <http://www.pittstate.edu/college/education/psychology/testing-center.dot>

**PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE BASE**

THE LEARNER AND LEARNING

Professional educators must understand that learning and development patterns vary among individuals, that learners bring unique individual differences to the learning process and that learners need supportive and safe learning environments to thrive.

1. The candidate knows how learning occurs (how learners construct knowledge, acquire skills and develop disciplined thinking processes) and how to use instructional strategies that promote individual growth.
2. The candidate understands that cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional and physical development influences learning.
3. The candidate understands and identifies differences in approaches to learning and performance and designs experiences that incorporate individuals' strengths to promote growth.
4. The candidate understands students with exceptional needs and knows how to use strategies and resources to meet these needs.
5. The candidate knows how to access information about the values of diverse cultures and communities and how to incorporate languages, experiences, cultures and community resources into practice.
6. The candidate understands how to manage the learning environment by organizing, allocating and coordinating the resources of time and space.
7. The candidate knows how to design experiences using strategies that enhance learner motivation and engagement.
8. The candidate understands the processes needed to foster a respectful learning community.

CONTENT

Professional educators must have a deep and flexible understanding of the field and be able to draw upon the central concepts and structures of their discipline as they work with learners. They integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity and communication) to help learners apply content to propose solutions, forge new understandings, solve problems and imagine possibilities. Professional educators connect information to local, state, national and global issues.

9. The candidate understands that learners should question, analyze and understand concepts from diverse perspectives.
10. The candidate has a deep knowledge of student content standards and learning progressions in the discipline(s).
11. The candidate knows how to use supplementary resources and technologies effectively to ensure accessibility and relevance for all.
12. The candidate understands how disciplinary knowledge can be applied as a lens to address local and global issues.
13. The candidate realizes that content knowledge is not a fixed body of facts but is complex, culturally situated and ever evolving. S/he keeps abreast of new ideas and best practices in the field.
14. The candidate knows major concepts, assumptions and debates that are central to the discipline.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

Professional educators understand and integrate assessment, planning and instructional strategies in coordinated and engaging ways for effective practice. They understand how to design, implement, interpret and communicate results from a range of assessments.

15. The candidate knows how to engage learners in multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge and skills as part of the assessment process.
16. The candidate understands the positive impact of effective descriptive feedback and knows a variety of strategies for communicating this feedback.
17. The candidate knows how to engage learners actively in the assessment process and to develop each learner's capacity to reflect on and communicate about their individual progress.
18. The candidate understands the theories and processes of curriculum design (appropriate sequencing, developmentally appropriate instruction, builds on learners' prior knowledge and experiences).
19. The candidate understands the process for aligning instruction and assessment with learning targets.
20. The candidate understands how theory, research and best practices impact ongoing planning and instructional practice.
21. The candidate knows how to engage learners in using technology tools and a range of skills to access, interpret, evaluate and apply information.
22. The candidate knows how to incorporate a variety of strategies that stimulate the cognitive processes associated with various kinds of learning (e.g., critical and creative thinking, problem framing and problem solving, invention, memorization and recall).
23. The candidate knows how to apply a variety of developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate instructional strategies to achieve learning targets.
24. The candidate knows how to analyze assessment data to understand patterns and gaps in learning, to guide planning and instruction and to provide meaningful feedback.

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Professional educators create and support safe, productive learning environments. They must engage in meaningful and intensive professional learning and self-renewal by regularly examining practice through ongoing study, self-reflection and collaboration. Professional educators contribute to accomplishing their school's mission and goals and demonstrate leadership by modeling ethical behavior, contributing to positive changes in practice and advancing their profession.

25. The candidate knows how to use information and technology ethically, legally and safely.
26. The candidate understands and knows how to use a variety of self-assessment and problem-solving strategies to analyze and reflect on his/her practice and to plan for adaptations/adjustments.
27. The candidate understands laws related to learners' rights and teacher responsibilities (e.g., IDEA, FERPA, mandated reporting, etc.).
28. The candidate understands schools as organizations within a historical, cultural, political and social context and knows how to work with others across the system to support learners.
29. The candidate knows how to contribute to a common culture that supports high expectations for student learning.
30. The candidate understands the expectations of the profession including codes of ethics, professional standards of practice and relevant law and policy.
31. The candidate knows how to communicate effectively with all members of the learning community.

**Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE)
High-Incidence Special Education Standards**

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. | The special educator understands the historical and philosophical foundations of special education, the characteristics of the disability, the impacts of the disability on education, and the legal parameters appropriate for each learner’s educational needs. |
| 2. | The special educator uses a variety of assessment instruments, procedures, and technologies for learner screening, evaluation, eligibility decisions, instructional planning, progress monitoring, and technology considerations |
| 3. | The special educator uses Individual Educational Programs (IEPs), learning environments, individual learner characteristics, assessment, teacher knowledge of subject matter, and technology for effective instructional planning and implementation. |
| 4. | The special educator uses a variety of evidence-based instructional strategies, including effective adaptations, learner performance, and transitions; to promote learning and improve learner outcomes. |
| 5. | The special educator demonstrates effective communication skills to enhance collaboration and consultation among school professionals, to improve learner outcomes while planning for and implementing effective instruction and services; to implement the IEP, deliver instruction, and evaluate IEP implementation; and, to plan for and implement effective transition services. |
| 6. | The special educator understands the critical elements of language and literacy; identifies and uses evidence-based interventions to meet the instructional needs specific to reading, writing, math and other content areas; and includes the principles of universal design for learning and the use of technology to support literacy and to make data-based decisions. |
| 7. | The special educator demonstrates knowledge and skill in the use of problem solving models, including Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) within the Multi-Tier System of Support (MTSS) framework; conducts Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBA) and develops Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) to manage behavior and facilitate appropriate behavioral responses; demonstrates cultural sensitivity in the development and use of social skills curricula; and promotes the self-determination skills of learners. |
| 8. | Family and Community Engagement - The special educator understands the importance of family and community engagement in the special education process; includes families in special education program development and implementation; understands the legal rights of families; and works to actively engage and empower families as partners in the education of the learner. |

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The following section includes frequently asked questions and answers intended to be helpful in understanding the MAT-SPED Program.

Can I enter the MAT program with an emphasis in Special Education if I don't have a degree?

No, a bachelor's degree with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is required, in addition to one year of paraprofessional experience in special education.

What if I do not have a 3.0 undergraduate GPA?

Applicants with less than a 3.0 GPA but greater than a 2.75 may be admitted conditionally; an additional GPA review will occur after the completion of 12 hours in which the candidate must have maintained at least a 3.0 GPA.

How long will it take to complete the program?

The 36-credit hour program is designed to be completed in a two-year sequence of six semesters, with six hours of course work being completed each semester. Courses are to be taken in sequence to maximize the learning experience.

Are courses offered online?

Yes, course content is presented online by utilizing Canvas, PSU's learning management system.

Can I continue to work as a paraeducator as I take classes?

*Candidates **must** be employed as a paraeducator in a level-appropriate high-incidence setting during the entirety of the program **OR** serve as the teacher of record in a level-appropriate high-incidence special education setting (if the KSDE pilot has been extended or made permanent).*

When will I become certified to teach?

Candidates hired to be the teacher of record will apply for the limited apprentice license upon entry to the program if the KSDE pilot has been extended or made permanent. All other candidates will be eligible for full licensure in the state of Kansas upon completion of the program and appropriate testing.

If I am accepted into the program, when do classes begin?

The two-year cohort program starts once a year during the first summer session.

Who should I contact if I have additional questions?

Contact the Office of Teacher Education; 620-235-6153 or teachered@pittstate.edu.

What will happen if I don't meet the required conditions within the first 12 hours of the program?

Candidates are not allowed to continue in coursework until they have met all conditions to be fully admitted.

Why haven't I heard anything from PSU?

You may need to check your GUS email account! If you've been conditionally admitted, you have set up your GUS mail account and you need to regularly check it.

Who should I contact if I'm ever having trouble in the class or can't get in touch with my professor?

Academic questions should be directed to your advisor.

I've been conditionally admitted. How do I enroll myself in classes?

Your advisor will enroll you each semester. Since the program is offered in cohorts, enrollment by your advisor ensures enrollment in the correct courses.

I need to take a break from school so I am not taking courses this semester. What will happen?

Provided there have been no concerns about your academic work or professionalism, you will be re-admitted to the program without issue. You will enter the program at the point which you stopped taking coursework. It is important to note that courses are offered during particular semesters so you may have to wait a full year to return to the program.

How do I know which textbooks to buy?

You need to visit the PSU online bookstore (<http://pittstate.bncollege.com/>). Click "Textbooks" and then "Find Textbooks."