TEACHING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES - CHILDHOOD

The Special Education Master of Science Degree Program at Canisius is designed for those dedicated to meet the needs of students with disabilities, placing a strong emphasis on theory, research and practicum experience. The curriculum enables candidates to develop an understanding of etiology, related psychological and social factors and techniques proven effective for teaching students with diverse learning needs.

This program prepares candidates already holding a Childhood Certificate (Grades 1-6) to gain Certification in Special Education (SWD 1-6).

Learning Goal 1 (KNOWLEDGE – Observed in Writing)
Candidates in the Teacher Education programs will demonstrate content knowledge, pedagogical, and professional knowledge necessary for successful performance in their field.
Teacher candidates will:
- Acquire knowledge of each student, and demonstrate knowledge of student development and learning to promote achievement for all students.
- Know the content they are responsible for teaching, and the pedagogical content knowledge to plan instruction that ensures growth and achievement for all students.

Learning Goal 2 (KNOWLEDGE – Observed Skills and Dispositions)
Candidates in the Teacher Education programs will demonstrate professional skills and dispositions necessary for successful performance in their field.
Teacher candidates will:
- Demonstrate professional dispositions and implement instruction that engages and challenges all students to meet or exceed the learning standards.

Learning Goal 3 (SERVICE)
Candidates in the Teacher Education programs will demonstrate willingness to use their skills to benefit and serve society. Within the contexts of their work, candidates promote authentic learning, social and emotional development, and a commitment to social justice in environments that foster respect for diversity and the dignity of all.
Teacher candidates will:
- Work with all students to create a dynamic learning environment that supports achievement and growth.
- Use multiple measures to assess and document student growth, evaluate instructional effectiveness, and modify instruction for diverse learners.

Learning Goal 4 (PROFESSIONALISM)
Candidates will demonstrate self-reflection as a habit of mind, continuously assessing and refining their professional practice as they construct a rich repertoire of research-based knowledge, skills, and attitudes for effective performance ensuring that all students and/or clients have optimal opportunities to learn and grow.
Teacher candidates will:
- Set informed goals and strive for continuous professional growth.

Learning Goal 5 (LEADERSHIP)
Candidates will become adept at applying their acquired knowledge in the process of evaluating their own professional performance and decision-making with respect to its impact on students and/or clients, organizations, and the wider community.
Teacher candidates will:
- Demonstrate professional responsibility and engage relevant stakeholders to maximize impact on student growth, development, and learning.

SPE 570 Standards Based Assessment 3 Credits
Addresses the empirical basis of test construction and assessment including standardized tests, curriculum based assessment, criterion-referenced assessment and alternative methods of evaluation. Monitoring student performance as it relates to New York State standards including academic, management, social and physical abilities. Test modifications, IEP development and multicultural issues are highlighted.

SPE 580 Classroom Management 3 Credits
Provides an overview of classroom interventions supported by research. Managing group and individual behavior and promoting positive social skills are addressed. The importance of a multidisciplinary team approach to schoolhome collaboration, functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans is highlighted. Systematic data collection procedures to determine intervention effectiveness are emphasized.
SPE 640 Learning and Behavioral Disabilities (LBD); Etiology and Research Based Interventions 3 Credits
Provides an in-depth analysis of the causes of LBD and the assessment procedures and interventions proven effective for students with LBD. Addresses the referral process, IEP development, assistive technology, the continuum of services and collaboration. A comprehensive review of the literature on current trends and controversial issues facing students with LBD is emphasized.

SPE 631 Reading and Writing Process for Students with Learning and Behavioral Disorders 3 Credits
This course is designed for candidates seeking certification in childhood/adolescent special education and provides a thorough investigation of the reading and writing process; content focuses on research-based interventions, methods, and strategies for students with mild disabilities, at-risk youth, and English Language Learners. Candidates will develop lesson plans in reading and writing across the content areas, use and develop formal and informal assessments, and develop curricular accommodations for students with diverse learning needs. Other topics include: Direct Instruction, fluency, decoding, oral language and vocabulary development, comprehension strategies, Curriculum Based Measures to evaluate writing, rubrics, New York State Assessment expectations in reading and writing, procedural facilitators, strategic writing instruction, developing appropriate goals and objectives for student Individualized Education Plans, adapting expository text, determining readability and making accommodations, and designing and implementing developmentally appropriate reading/writing lesson plans in a 25 hour supervised practicum experience.

SPE 650 Developmental Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorders: Analysis of Causes and Research-Based Inte 3 Credits
Provides an overview of the comprehensive needs of students with Autism Spectrum and Severe Developmental Disabilities. Addresses etiology, myths, assessment, treatment, research-based interventions, program models and legal issues. Focuses on clinical implications for classroom and home environments, including family collaboration and the use of assistive technology.

SPE 652 Functional Curriculum for Students with Severe Disabilities and ASD 3 Credits
Provides an overview of New York State learning standards for students with severe disabilities. Emphasizes differentiated instruction, accommodations and modifications, assistive technology and assessment utilizing alternative performance indicators. Emphasizes research-based approaches to functional academics, adaptive behavior and life skills, social development, communication, leisure/recreation, employment, community-based instruction and classroom management. Requirements include 25 hours practicum experience.

SPE 698 Seminar in Teaching and Assessment 3 Credits
Discusses current issues in Special Education and highlights research findings. Emphasizes application of research-based strategies in classrooms serving students with disabilities across the continuum of services. Requirements include 50 hours practicum experience.