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 an Adolescence Certificate (Grades 7-12) to gain Certification in Special Education (SWD 7-12).

### Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPE 570</td>
<td>Standards Based Assessment</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPE 580</td>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPE 644</td>
<td>Collaborative Practices on a Transdisciplinary Team</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPE 631</td>
<td>Reading and Writing Process for Students with Learning and Behavioral Disorders</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPE 640</td>
<td>Learning and Behavioral Disabilities (LBD); Etiology and Research Based Interventions</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPE 649</td>
<td>Transition Issues for Adolescents with Disabilities</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPE 652</td>
<td>Functional Curriculum for Students with Severe Disabilities and ASD</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDU 615</td>
<td>Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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<td>Choose one of the following options (in consultation with the program director)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDU 570</td>
<td>Pre-Student Teaching</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Special Education Elective</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPE 692</td>
<td>Student Teaching</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total Credits:** 34.5

### Learning Goals & Objectives

#### 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.

#### 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.
Courses

SPE 536 Differentiating Instruction for Diverse Adolescent Learners 3 Credits
This course focuses on educating adolescents regardless of their social and cultural backgrounds, language proficiencies, differences in ability and special needs. Social and emotional issues pertaining to an inclusive classroom and school will be discussed in addition to addressing the knowledge, skills and strategies for planning, managing, coordinating and evaluating inclusive teaching and learning environments. Attention will be given to collaboration with parents, specialists, agencies and community organizations as well as laws and policies that serve diverse learners.

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 644 Collaborative Practices on a Transdisciplinary Team 3 Credits
Investigates systems of collaboration supported by empirical evidence. Investigates the referral process, IEP development, behavioral intervention plans, and support in general education. Best practices for general and special educators, counseling, occupational and physical therapy, speech pathology, and hearing and vision services are synthesized to promote the successful team approach. Promoting parent involvement is emphasized.

SPE 650 Intellectual Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorders: Etiology & Educational Needs 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 659 Transition Issues for Adolescents with Disabilities 3 Credits
Highlights research-based interventions that incorporate New York State Part 200 Regulations on transition. Addresses level-one assessment, transition IEP, family and community involvement and outcome-based instruction. Fostering self-advocacy among students with disabilities and person-centered planning are emphasized. Service options available in education, employment, community and adult living are explored.

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.

EDU 515 Research Methods 3 Credits
Candidates will develop an understanding of the research process from formulating a research problem through data analysis and interpretation. Candidates will learn how to critically analyze research studies, discuss ethical considerations in conducting research and discuss the importance of scientific research for educational policy and practice. Each candidate will plan a research project consistent with his/her interests and with the course goals.

Prerequisite: EDU 515.