

Special Education Program

The **special education minor** prepares teacher education candidates to earn a Cross-Categorical Special Education Certification (#801). Teacher candidates choose an emphasis area within the fields of Cognitive Disabilities (CD), Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBD), or Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD). Certification courses generally follow a fall-only or spring-only course delivery model at the undergraduate level. Candidates may choose between two developmental ranges: middle childhood-early adolescence (MC-EA) (ages 6-13 years) or early adolescence-adolescence (EA-A) (ages 11-21 years). **All candidates must apply for admission to the special education minor separately from other teacher education programs.**

The **special education minor** is comprised of the following program tracks:

1. Undergraduate degree-seeking certification minor
2. Undergraduate non-degree-seeking (add-on) certification sequence

Note: Federal financial aid is not available for students pursuing an add-on teaching certification. Private educational loan opportunities are also limited for non-degree seeking students.

Minor requirements

The **special education minor** has two tracks¹ for which candidates may seek admission at the undergraduate level:

- Degree-seeking minor and
- Non-degree-seeking add-on certification.

The special education minor track is for undergraduate degree-seeking candidates completing a traditional undergraduate major and minor course sequence. The non-degree-seeking add-on track is for candidates who have already completed an undergraduate degree in education and hold, or are eligible to hold, a Wisconsin teaching license.

¹ Please choose the appropriate program track when applying for admission, as applying for the wrong track may cause a delay in your admission.

Admission

Degree seeking:

Degree seeking teacher education candidates that desire to earn cross-categorical special education certification must complete a separate application for admission to the special education minor. Candidates must be admitted to a teacher education major program (Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence Education Program, MC-EA; or Secondary Teacher Education Program, STEP) in order to be admitted into the degree-seeking special education minor. However, candidates may apply for admission to the minor in the same semester as application to the major program. Admission to the MC-EA or STEP program does not guarantee admission to the Special Education Program.

Application Requirements:

- Candidates must meet all of the requirements for admission to a teacher education major program (MC-EA or STEP).
- Candidates must have at least 25 hours of experience working directly with individuals with exceptionalities. All experience should

occur after high school graduation. The age level of individuals is not limited (birth through adult is acceptable); however, experience within the developmental range of certification is highly encouraged. Candidates must upload a document showing at least 25 hours of experience with individuals with disabilities with a verifying signature and signer's contact information at the time of application for admission to the minor.

- Candidates must include a Statement of Intent that speaks to their rationale for choosing a special education minor at UWL. Statements should be no longer than two pages, double spaced using 12-point font. This statement must be uploaded at the time of application for admission to the minor.

Extenuating circumstances:

On occasion, a student may have significant extenuating circumstances that prevent them from meeting one of the admission criteria listed above or in the major program admission requirements. These applicants should provide a request for consideration with their online application. The request for consideration should include:

- A detailed letter documenting why the applicant should still be considered for admission. Documentation should include evidence to support the request for consideration (for example, why the GPA requirement was not met).
- Contact information for two individuals who can support the applicant's request for consideration and who can speak to the applicant's ability to be successful in the Special Education Program. The contact information should be added to the end of the letter requesting consideration, and this document must be uploaded at the time of application for admission to the minor. The contact information should include, at a minimum the following:
 - a. Name of contact person
 - b. Phone number
 - c. Address
 - d. Email
 - e. Information on how the contact knows the applicant

Special Education Program applications are accepted during the third week of each semester. All minor application materials (<https://www.uwlax.edu/educational-studies/admission-requirements/spe-minor-admission>) are due by 4:00 pm on the Friday of the third week each semester. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Non-degree seeking add-on:

Non-degree seeking teacher education candidates that desire to earn a cross-categorical special education add-on certification must apply for admission to the Special Education Program. All application materials must be submitted to the Special Education Program Director for admission consideration. Special Education Program add-on applications (<https://www.uwlax.edu/educational-studies/admission-requirements/spe-add-on-requirements>) are electronic and accepted on a rolling admission basis. Complete details, including requirements for admission, are available from the Department of Educational Studies (<http://www.uwlax.edu/educational-studies>).

Curriculum

(38 credits)

All core courses are required for each certification option.

Code	Title	Credits
Core courses:		
EDS 308	Foundations of Literacy	3

EDS 318	Literacy Methods I	3
EDS 463	Designing Instruction and Ongoing Assessment for Diverse Learners	3
SPE 340	Collaboration and Transition: From School to Community	3
SPE 401	Introduction to Exceptional Individuals	3
SPE 424	Classroom Management and Positive Behavior Practices	3
SPE 452	Individual Educational Assessment	3
SPE 461	Field Experience in Special Education	2
Cross-categorical special education professional practice courses (see options below)		15
Total Credits		38

Professional practice option 1: Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence (MC-EA)

Code	Title	Credits
SPE 446	Methods in Cross-Categorical Special Education-Middle Childhood/Early Adolescence	3
SPE 483	Student Teaching Cross-Categorical Special Education: Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence	11
SPE 430	Seminar in Special Education	1
Total Credits		15

Professional practice option 2: Early Adolescence-Adolescence (EAA)

Code	Title	Credits
SPE 447	Methods in Cross-Categorical Special Education-Early Adolescence/Adolescence	3
SPE 484	Student Teaching Cross-Categorical Special Education: Early Adolescence-Adolescence	11
SPE 430	Seminar in Special Education	1
Total Credits		15

All certification coursework must be completed prior to the professional practice semester. Candidates must also earn passing scores on the Middle School Content Knowledge Test (Praxis Subject Assessment test #5146) and the Wisconsin Foundations of Reading Test (FoRT), complete self-report criminal background check documents, complete the pre-student teaching portfolio prior to student teaching, and the post-student teaching electronic portfolio benchmark requirement.

Degree-seeking candidates must have a combined cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of at least 2.75 in order to enroll in the student teaching semester.

Non-degree-seeking candidates must have a 2.75 GPA in the special education coursework in order to enroll in the student teaching semester.

Sequence of courses

SPE minor for MC-EA majors

During an MC-EA major's junior, senior, and 5th year, courses for the SPE minor should be taken in the following sequence:

Year 3 Fall semester: Field 1 block (also part of MC-EA requirements)

- EDS 402 Field Experience I: Early Childhood-Middle Childhood/Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence (2 cr.)
- EDS 413 Teaching Social Studies: Early Childhood-Middle Childhood/Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence (3 cr.)
- EDS 418 Literacy Methods II (3 cr.)
- SPE 401 Introduction to Exceptional Individuals (3 cr.)

Year 3 Spring semester: SPE block

- SPE 461 Field Experience in Special Education (2 cr.)¹
- SPE 424 Classroom Management and Positive Behavior Practices (3 cr.)²
- SPE 340 Collaboration and Transition: From School to Community (3 cr.)¹
- SPE 446 Methods in Cross-Categorical Special Education-Middle Childhood/Early Adolescence (3 cr.)¹
- EDS 463 Designing Instruction and Ongoing Assessment for Diverse Learners (3 cr.) (could be taken with Field 2 block instead)

Year 4 Fall semester: Field 2 block (some are also part of MC-EA requirements)

- EDS 445 Field Experience II: Early Childhood-Middle Childhood/Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence (2 cr.)
- EDS 421 Teaching General Science Methods: Early Childhood-Middle Childhood/Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence (3 cr.)
- EDS 422 Teaching Mathematics Methods: Early Childhood-Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence (2 cr.)
- EDS 452 Teaching in Schools (3 cr.)
- SPE 452 Individual Educational Assessment (3 cr.)¹

Year 4 Spring semester: General education student teaching & edTPA

- EDS 493 Student Teaching: Early Childhood-Middle Childhood/Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence (1-11 cr.)
- EDS 492 Student Teaching Seminar (1 cr.)

Year 5 Fall semester: SPE student teaching

- SPE 483 Student Teaching Cross-Categorical Special Education: Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence (11 cr.)¹
- SPE 430 Seminar in Special Education (1 cr.)¹

¹ Open to SPE minors only.

² Open to SPE minors and adapted physical education minors only.