

Radford University
Graduate Certificate

Name of Certificate: Special Education, Visual Impairment

CIP Code: 13.1009

Initiation Date: Summer 2022

Description of Certificate:

The Graduate Certificate in Special Education, Visual Impairment is designed to provide specific background, education, and tools to licensed special educators to prepare them to address the needs of preK-12 learners with blindness and visual impairments. The program will educate students about the definitions, characteristics, and needs of learners who are blind or have visual impairments. Students will develop knowledge and skills in vision assessment, the anatomy of the eye and the variety of causes of visual impairment, the teaching of Braille, and identifying, understanding, and implementing a range of specialized instructional strategies and accommodations for visually impaired learners. Graduates will be prepared to teach and support preK-12 learners who are blind and visually impaired.

This Graduate Certificate provides a route to licensure/endorsement in Special Education, Blindness and Visual Impairment preK-12. The certificate program will provide graduates with the necessary coursework to complete the requirements for their provisional licensure or to add an additional endorsement in a licensure area. Upon completion of VDOE prescribed coursework, students will be able to apply for endorsement in Special Education, Blindness and Visual Impairment, preK-12 through their employing school division and the Virginia Department of Education.

See Appendix for Virginia's Licensure Regulations: 8VAC20-23-520. Special Education, Blindness and Visual Impairments preK-12

Target Audience:

The target audience is licensed special education teachers in Virginia.

Time to complete:

The certificate program will be available to both non-degree and degree-seeking graduate students. The certificate will be offered on both a full-time and part-time basis. It is anticipated that the majority of students will be working and will attend on a part-time basis.

Degree-seeking students can take courses any time during their program. Students who are enrolled full-time can complete the certificate program in one year (three semesters). Part-time students maintaining a course load of six credits per semesters can complete the program in two years (five semesters). Part-time students maintaining a course load of three credits per semester can complete the program in three years (seven semesters).

Non-degree seeking students who are enrolled full-time can complete the certificate program in one year (three semesters). Part-time students maintaining a course load of six credits per semester can complete the program in two years (five semesters). Part-time students maintaining a course load of three credits per semester can complete the program in three years (seven semesters).

Admission:

The following admission requirements apply to all applicants. All students must submit or satisfy the following requirements:

- Online application form and application fee of \$50
- Copy of a current teaching license (full collegiate or provisional) in Special Education
- A resume
- Official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate institutions attended
- Two professional recommendations.

No test of English as foreign language will be required for entrance into the program.

Curriculum Requirements:

The curriculum will focus on educating students to teach preK-12 learners who are blind or visually impaired. Students will learn the literary code of Braille, Braille reading, writing and math, and strategies for teaching Braille. Students will learn how to address the medical and educational implications of visual impairment. Coursework will provide students with knowledge in developing accessible materials, identifying, and implementing specialized instructional strategies, and developing individualized education programs.

Program Requirements

Number of Credit Hours

20 credit hours of graduate level courses

Required Courses: 20 credit hours

EDSP 650 Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments (3 credit hours)

EDSP 653 Teaching Methods for Students with Visual Impairments (3 credit hours)

EDSP 654 Assistive Technology for Individuals with Sensory Impairments (3 credit hours)

EDSP 655 Braille Code (3 credit hours)

EDSP 656 Braille Reading and Writing (3 credit hours)

EDSP 657 Curriculum and Assessment for Students with Visual Impairments (3 credit hours)

EDSP 658 Medical and Educational Implications of Visual Impairments (3 credit hours)

EDSP 659 Orientation and Mobility for Students with Visual Impairments (2 credit hours)

Faculty

Faculty appointments in the Graduate Certificate in Special Education, Visual Impairment will be established by the Dean of the College of Education and Human Development upon recommendation by the Director of the School of Teacher Education and Leadership. Faculty members utilized in the certificate program include full-time faculty from the School of Teacher Education and Leadership.

Minimum requirement for faculty teaching in the certificate include:

- A Master's degree in Special Education
- Three years of teaching experience in K-12 schools

No adjunct faculty will be needed to initiate the Graduate Certificate in Special Education, Visual Curriculum.

Course Delivery Format:

The courses for the Graduate Certificate in Special Education, Visual Impairment are all offered in online formats. Radford University utilizes Desire to Learn (D2L) for online content and Zoom video conferencing will be used for weekly class interactions in synchronous courses, small group face-to-face sessions and presentations, as well as for advising students in the certificate program. The University provides technical support personnel who are available during regular business hours. D2L provides support 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All individuals currently teaching for the program have provided or are currently providing asynchronous and/or synchronous online instruction. The university has adequate resources to deliver the certificate program.

Resources:

Resources required to support the program include existing resources to support current programs such as student support services (e.g., enrollment, help desk, library); faculty support services (e.g., copying, contracts) and general administration (e.g., budgeting and forecasting). The University provides support services to students and faculty for online course development and delivery. The graduate program coordinator in special education will serve as the administrator of the program. She will engage in recruiting activities, review and approve admissions, and complete program reports. Existing faculty will teach certificate courses within their current teaching load. No new faculty positions are needed to initiate and sustain the certificate program. The university has sufficient resources to initiate and sustain the certificate program.

Gainful Employment:

This certificate is a Gainful Employment program. The certificate program will come under Gainful Employment regulations.

Course Descriptions:

Core Courses

EDSP 650 - Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairment

Credits: (3)

Instructional Method: online

Provides an overview of the characteristics of and services to persons with visual impairments, including the impact of visual impairment on infants' and children's growth and development, child and adolescent emotional and social development, and family interaction patterns.

Considers the educational, conceptual, psycho-social, and physical implications of a visual impairment. Course delivered online.

EDSP 653 - Teaching Methods for Students with Visual Impairments

Credits: (3)

Instructional Method: Three hours lecture.

Prerequisites: EDSP 650

Emphasizes methods of teaching compensatory skills, the core curriculum, and technology for use by students who are blind and visually impaired. Addresses curriculum development, adaptations, and teaching methodology for individuals with visual impairments. Provides information on adaptations within various educational programs and adaptation of general education classroom materials and procedures for children and youth with visual impairments.

EDSP 654 - Assistive Technology for Individuals with Sensory Impairments

Credits: (3)

Instructional Method: Lecture

Prerequisites: EDSP 650

For teachers and other professionals interested in serving individuals with visual impairments and blindness and other sensory disabilities. Participants will acquire awareness and knowledge specific technologies and resources available to enhance and improve the ability of individuals with visual and other sensory impairments to succeed in school, daily living activities and employment.

EDSP 655 - Braille Code

Credits: (3)

Instructional Method: Three hours lecture.

Prerequisites: EDSP 650

Provides instruction in the development, use, and application of the Braille literary code and its implications for educational/literacy programs for students with visual disabilities. Students will develop the skills to read and write contracted and uncontracted Braille, while acquiring instructional methodologies for teaching children who are blind to read and write. Sources of Braille materials for educational purposes are identified.

EDSP 656 - Braille Reading and Writing

Credits: (3)

Instructional Method: Three hours lecture.

Prerequisites: EDSP 650 and EDSP 655

Provides instruction on transcription of advanced Braille codes, including: Mathematics (UEB and Nemeth), music, foreign language and other specialized codes. Introduces techniques for teaching skills in each code. Explores technology tools used to create Braille and tactile materials in addition to other assistive technologies used for instruction in STEM content.

EDSP 657 - Curriculum and Assessment for Students with Visual Impairments

Credits: (3)

Instructional Method: Three hours lecture.

Prerequisites: EDSP 650

Provides students with knowledge and understanding of the educational assessment of students with visual impairments and additional disabilities including deaf-blindness. Students practice assessing and planning educational programs for students with visual impairments. Addresses assessment of technology for students with visual impairments. Examines determination of

learning needs and appropriate learning media, relationship of assessment, IEP development, and placement.

EDSP 658 - Medical and Educational Implications of Visual Impairments

Credits: (3)

Instructional Method: Three hours lecture.

Prerequisites: EDSP 650

Provides an introduction to anatomy and physiology of the visual system and the educational implications of visual pathology. Topics include anatomy of the human eye, normal visual development, pathology of the eye, examination procedures for the identification of visual pathology, and the effects of pathology on visual learning and development.

EDSP 659 - Orientation and Mobility for Students with Visual Impairments

Credits: (2)

Instructional Method: Two hours lecture.

Prerequisites: EDSP 650

Establishes how the need for independent travel in the blind population created the field of O&M. Explores the philosophy and history of orientation and mobility including cane instruction, dog guides and methods of travel. Addresses techniques in developing orientation skills and basic mobility instruction. Motor and concept skill development are emphasized.