

GRADUATE MAT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

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The purpose of Quinnipiac's graduate Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education program is to prepare teacher candidates with perspectives, knowledge and skills to become master educators in the area of special education. The School of Education recognizes that the concept of educator is three-dimensional, and that successful educators must be teachers, learners and leaders. Therefore, graduates of the Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education program are teachers who lead all students to learn, learners who continue to learn as they continue to teach, and leaders who influence the culture of their schools in ways that support best practices in teaching and learning.

The program reflects the spirit and mission of Quinnipiac with close attention to the teaching standards for the state of Connecticut and to the standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The three values of "excellence in education, a sensitivity to students, and a spirit of community," which are the heart of Quinnipiac's mission statement, are woven throughout the program.

General Information

The Quinnipiac University special education curriculum is an intensive five-semester program of study consisting of core certification courses that provide eligibility for teacher certification, advanced coursework in literacy, numeracy and pedagogy to satisfy master's degree requirements, and a unique internship/residency experience which provides pre-service teacher candidates the opportunity to learn about schools, students and teaching.

The graduate MAT program offers Quinnipiac teacher candidates a Master of Arts in Teaching degree leading to certification through the Connecticut State Department of Education. Consistent with the university's mission, arts and sciences studies are integrated with professional studies to prepare graduates who have depth and breadth of content knowledge and strong pedagogical skills.

Internship/Residency

Candidates participate in an internship during the first two semesters of the program. Quinnipiac University has developed collaborative partnerships with school districts throughout central and southern Connecticut to provide graduate candidates with guided, hands-on professional practice and to defray some costs of the program. Candidates in the internship receive a tuition reduction during the internship semesters. (An optional second internship/residency is available during the final two semesters, resulting in significant additional tuition reduction.)

Interns serve in area schools in a variety of capacities and as substitute teachers with guidance from an on-site adviser and from a Quinnipiac faculty member. Each intern has the opportunity to participate in staff meetings and take part in all school operations, becoming a valued member of the school faculty. In the late afternoon and early evening, candidates continue their formal studies on the Quinnipiac campus. During a residency, teacher candidates remain in a single classroom for 10 weeks or more as a co-teacher with a cooperating teacher and a university supervisor providing guidance and support.

Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education Curriculum

To complete all requirements of the MAT SPED program, a candidate must complete all coursework and successfully complete all performance tasks to qualify for teacher certification.

Code	Title	Credits
ED 571	Learning and Teaching the Developing Child	3
SPED 501	Seminar and Mentoring I	1
SPED 545	Introduction to the Exceptional Child	3
SPED 565	Specific Learning Disabilities: Identification, Instruction and Assessment (LD)	3
ED 544	Developing Literacy in the Primary Grades	3
SPED 502	Seminar and Mentoring II	1
SPED 573	Reading Disorders: Assessment, Planning and Instruction	3
SPED 564	Teaching Students with Reading and Math Disorders	3
ED 577	Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom	3
SPED 566	Autism Spectrum Disorders	3
SPED 571	Emotional and Behavioral Disorder Identification, Management, and Assessment	3
SPED 572	Educating Young Children with Special Needs	3
SPED 650	Student Teaching I/Special Education	3
SPED 568	Assessment/Program Planning and Evaluation of Children with Special Needs	3
ED 554	Internship and Seminar I	2
SPED 575	Working with Gifted and Talented Students (optional)	
SPED 576	Designing and Utilizing Assistive Learning Technologies	3
SPED 570	Special Education Law	3
ED 555	Internship and Career Development Seminar	1
SPED 582	Research in Special Education	2
SPED 651	Student Teaching II/Special Education	3
Total Credits		52

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Master of Arts in Teaching program, teacher candidates will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

1. **Content Knowledge:** Identify and define the major concepts of their discipline and understand that content is dynamic and ways of knowing are constantly changing.

2. **Instructional Strategies:** Recognize varied instructional practices and apply appropriate instructional strategies based upon principles of effective teaching.
3. **Learning Differences, Learner Development:** Recognize the complexity of human diversity and provide an instructional program that is responsive to the needs of diverse students.
4. **Instructional Strategies:** Apply appropriate technology to enhance the teaching and learning process.
5. **Professional Learning and Ethical Practice:** Demonstrate the skills and commitment to engage in reflective, mindful practice.
6. **Assessment:** Use multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision-making.
7. **Professional Learning and Ethical Practice:** Recognize that since content is dynamic and ways of knowing are constantly changing, the profession requires a commitment to continuous learning.
8. **Leadership and Collaboration:** Recognize that education has the power to be transformative and that their role as educators includes the responsibility to advocate on behalf of their students to promote social justice.
9. **Professional Learning and Ethical Practice, Leadership and Collaboration:** Demonstrate a willingness to work collaboratively with peers, practitioners in the field and/or MAT instructors to sustain a professional learning environment to support student learning.
10. **Leadership and Collaboration:** Demonstrate an understanding that scholarly research is essential to improving their own practice and to enhancing the knowledge base of the profession.

Admission

To ensure admission into the program with a placement in an internship, applicants should complete the application process as early as possible. Admission to the graduate MAT Special Education (SPED) program is based on a holistic review by program faculty of the following admission requirements:

1. A 3.00 minimum overall undergraduate GPA (from all colleges and universities attended) with a subject area major or appropriate interdisciplinary major.
2. A transcript review that indicates a B or better performance in courses related to mathematics as well as English/language arts. (Students whose transcripts do not meet this criteria will be required to provide proof of basic math/reading competencies as determined by the MAT SPED program director.)
3. At least two written recommendations from individuals who have recent knowledge (within the last two years) of the applicant's suitability as a prospective educator.
4. A written essay completed on site that meets program standards.
5. Evidence of strong basic skills in math, reading and writing. Evidence of strong basic skills can be provided through SAT or ACT scores. Alternatively, evidence may also be provided through completion of the Praxis Core Academic Skills Test. SAT, ACT or Praxis Core results will be reviewed by the program director. Any MAT SPED candidate whose scores indicate an area of weakness will be required to participate in a non-credit bearing remediation program that addresses any area of underperformance in math, reading or writing. Once completion of the remediation process is done by the candidate, the status of the candidate will be reviewed. All candidates will be considered probationary status until the improvement of basic skills is documented and remediated.

6. A formal interview during which the applicant is expected to demonstrate: an ability to communicate clearly, a demeanor appropriate to the teaching profession, and a maturity and attitude necessary to meet the demands of the MAT SPED program.
7. Effective July 1, 2010, Connecticut law requires all teacher candidates to undergo a criminal background check prior to being placed in a public school setting for field study, internship and student teaching. Because a clinical experience is an integral part of each semester, failure to abide by this law will make an applicant ineligible for admission to the program. The School of Education has procedures in place to assist candidates in obtaining the background check. The cost of the background check is the responsibility of the teacher candidate.

Retention

Teacher candidates in the MAT SPED program at Quinnipiac are expected to demonstrate the professional behaviors and dispositions articulated in both the School of Education's Professional Attributes and Dispositions document and the CT Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers. Candidates must maintain a GPA of 3.00 or higher for graduate courses in each semester with at least a B- or better in any education course. A grade of C+ or below in any education course (including the graduate content area courses) requires the candidate to retake the course at their expense and earn the minimum B- grade.

If the candidate, once formally accepted into the MAT SPED program, fails to maintain the minimum GPA, that candidate may be allowed to remain in the program for a single semester on probationary status. If a candidate on probation fails to meet the minimum GPA by the end of the single probationary semester, that candidate is dismissed from the program. Granting of probationary status is subject to the director's approval and is neither automatic nor guaranteed.

Candidates failing to meet professional standards in the program may be subject to suspension or dismissal. In addition, candidates who exhibit a lack of effort or responsibility in the program, or who reveal interpersonal skills unsuited or inappropriate for teaching, will be required to meet with the MAT SPED program director to discuss continuation in the program.

The School of Education is fully accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). The U.S. Department of Education recognizes CAEP as a specialized accrediting body for schools, colleges and departments of education.

Note: Because the education program is subject to state review on a regular basis, prospective and current students are advised to see the School of Education for up-to-date program information.